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DATA LINK

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The official newsletter of the Modesto Atari Computer Club

GUEST SPEAKER THIS MONTH

This month we welcome Wayne Petterson from Wayne's software





HOW TO ENLARGE YOUR SM124 MONOCHROME MONITOR'S SCREEN SIZE

by Jack P. Durre'

If you've used the Atari ST computers with the SM124 monochrome monitor, chances are quite good that you have come to accept the wide (black or white) border surrounding the usable area of the screen. You may have asked "why?", but probably only grumbled about it, and went back to work. If you've got the time (about 15 minutes, on average), the tools (3 or 4, and available from most Radio Shack stores), and the nerve (very little required!), this article will explain how you can actually have a LARGER, usable screen (as compared to the Mac)!

First, credit where credit is due...The original information for this modification came from the April, 1986 issue of "ST APPLICATIONS" magazine, in an article written by Albert Lew. I am merely explaining my own methods, following the original steps as outlined in Mr. Lew's article.

That said, let's get the caveats out of the way: While I may personally consider the following modifications to be simple and straightforward, I can't write a "Hello World" program in BASIC!!! In other words, what may be "simple" for me, may be quite difficult for you. If you feel that you are NOT qualified to make these modifications, DON'T! Find an able (and willing!) friend or service technician to do it for you, or forget the whole idea, and live with what you've got! If your monitor is in warranty, opening the case will, obviously, void that, and the possibility also exists that even if you wind up paying for repairs, the technician MAY refuse to work on your machine! (Chances are, however, that he's more likely to want to know more about making the mods himself!) Further, the electrical current coming from the wall plug is enough to knock you silly, or worse, and inside of the monitor case, it gets even stronger, so be aware that touching the wrong thing may well put you

into an "endless loop" of your own! In other words, YOU CAN GET KILLED! Now, if you've decided that you'd "kill to have a larger screen", then follow me!

Tools: These are really few in number, and quite simple to come by. Mr. Lew suggested some non-TV type of tools, but I'm going to stick to my guns here, and insist that you use the right tools for the job! You'll need a Phillips screwdriver, preferably a #1 size. (If you don't know the difference between a Phillips, and a slotted-head screwdriver, let me stop you right here, and suggest that you return to your programming!) You'll also need two TV "tuning tools"; a hex-tool, 3/32" ("across the flats", as they say) and a flat-bladed tool, 1/8" or so in blade width. Both of these tools should be made of non-conductive (plastic) material, and longer is better! A make-up mirror is also quite handy, particularly a free-standing one. I might also suggest a thick towel or other material to protect the face of your monitor and the top of your desk, during the time that you are moving it around. Finally, the toughest item of all...some CLEAR SPACE! You'll need to move the monitor around a little, and of course, it will need to be connected to your CPU (and I DON'T recommend trying to balance it in your lap!), so plan accordingly.

Next, let's try to orient ourselves, so that you aren't amputating the screen, while I am talking about the power cord! The "front" of the monitor is the viewing screen, the "rear" is where the power cord, and CPU/Monitor connector cable exit the case. Since we're going to turn the entire thing around, so that the screen is facing AWAY from us, "right" will now be the side where the speaker is located, and "left" obviously (it IS, isn't it?) will be opposite that, where the control knobs are. "Top" will still be in its usual location, and if you haven't already figured out where the bottom is, it's time for another cup of coffee!!!

Ready? Here we go!

Boot your system, using either the desktop, with one or more windows opened, or call up a text file. The ideal situation is to have text reaching all four corners of the screen, so that you will be able to compare from one area to another.

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Presidents Report

by Robert Johnstone

What happened last month? Did every body leave town? I hope that you have time in your schedule this month to attend the general meeting. We will be having a demonstration of Star Raiders II for the 8 bit users and for everyone, Wayne from Wayne's Software in Turlock is putting together a presentation that should please everyone.

Have you ever wanted just a little bit more from your word processor? Why not get into the printer driver and change things around to suit you? Or create some macros. If you use ST Writer you probably don't think that it has a macro function. Well it doesn't, but it has the next best thing. The F8 key. With the Merge File function you have the power of anything that you want to define as a macro. I suppose that you could even make a macro 1000 words long if it was something that you wrote all the time. I have created a macro that I call NORMAL that contains the normal control line. I have another that is called DOUBLE that contains all the necessary information to go into double column printing. I also have, SHORT which is for smaller than normal printer paper and one called LABEL for doing address labels. I have also as I stated earlier changed the XYZZX.DAT printer driver by changing the CONFIG.TXT and then rerunning CONFIG.TOS to re right the driver. I don't ever use the SUPERScript font without also changing to COMPRESSED mode also. I changed the instructions that tell my Panasonic printer to go into SUPERScript from 27,52 - to - 27,15,27,65,6 and the instruction that turns it off from 27,84 - to - 27,84,18. The 27,15 calls the superscript and the following 27,65,6 calls a half line space at the carriage return/line feed instead of the normal full line space. To bad that ST Writer didn't allow you to do this with a 'Control S' '1' but it doesn't work. Maybe sometime in the future. Now if I am writing something that I want to have very tiny print line after line like a return address label or possibly some fine print at the bottom of a contract to elude a purchaser.

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ST X-PRESS Diskmate News File

Volume 1, Number 5 May 1987

THE DISKMATE GRAPEVINE

Rumor has it that there is a special connector being made to allow the ST's to be hooked up to a multi-synch monitor. This means that we may soon have the capability of running low, medium, and high res from ONE monitor. This should be interesting. A laser drive was shown in Germany. It seems to work on the compact disk technology. We will be able to read and write to the disks (which will have a storage capacity of 500 terabytes!) The creator estimates the price to be around \$250 and they will be available by the end of 1987.

In Canada, Atari was showing 520 ST's with built in power cords and single sided disk drive's (a poorman's 1040 ST). There were also 520's with a meg of ram, supposedly it is very hard to find a "regular" ST in Canada anymore; all of them are upgraded. Firebird has released their next game, GOLDEN PATH.

looks very promising with nice graphics, sound, and animation. The game itself offers a very unique playing aspect, it seems that this program is very indepth. Atari has set some new dates for their new hardware. The laser printers are supposedly being finished up and will be ready "by the end of May". The Mega ST's won't be available until the end of June. And the Atari PC's also won't be available until either June or July. For everybody who is looking for the blitter chip in the next few weeks, don't count on it. As I have told everyone who asks me, Atari will most likely not be releasing the blitter until after the Mega ST's are released. The Mega's will contain the blitters, maybe Atari is hoping that people will get fed up waiting for the blitter and breakdown to buy the Mega ST's instead. The NEWSROOM, from the publishers of PRINTMASTER and PRINTMASTER PLUS - Unison World, is expected to be released shortly. It is another desktop publishing system, from the various photos that we have seen it doesn't look too bad.

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Modesto Atari Computer Club disk #39

by Robert Forster, 16-Bit Librarian

DISK 39

DGDB ARCADE GAME (C)
QUICK DATA BASE v0.9 (C,M)

DISK 40

TINYVIEW3 18 TINY PICS
(ALL ANIMATED LOW REZ)

DISK 41

TINYVIEW3 20 TINY PICS
(MANY HIGH REZ)

C = color monitor M = monochrome monitor

DGDB is a lowrez arcade game in the tradition of Time Bandit and is one of the best public domain games to come along. The name of the game is "Die grosse deutsche Ballerspiel" which roughly translated means "The Great/Best German Pinball/Video(?) Game". No matter how talented you are with a joystick, this is not a game which will be mastered in a single evening. The plethora of species of goblins not only multiply faster than tribbles but some transform into other species when you shoot them. There is an editor available from the author (Thomas Ehlers, Hamburg) for creating new play fields. Excellent, excellent, excellent!

QUICK DATA BASE is a TOS keyword index db, which, to quote the doc file, "does one thing, but does it quite well: look up data fast".

.....
THIS PROGRAM WILL NOT BOOT
FROM A WRITE PROTECTED DISK
.....

The main program is just over 50K, is menu driven and can output to either screen or printer. Included with the program is the 80K db, MAGAZINE, which contains data on ST-only articles from Antic, Analog, and ST-Log magazines from 9/85 to 2/87. When a keyword search is successful all other keywords pertaining to the hit are displayed, as well as a brief description of the article and the

I also changed the Column Width call in t. CONFIG.TXT file magazine, volume, and page in which the article appeared. All of these fields may be edited. I don't know how exhaustive this particular db is, but it contains 71 keywords and is at the very least a solid foundation on which to build.

Disks 40 and 41 are picture disks, each containing the viewer, TINYVIEW3. Disk 40 contains the animated color pictures ANIMATIO, CACTUS1, DRAGON1, DRAGON2, FRAC11, FRAC12, GOLDFISH, JUKEBOX, MOUNT, ORGANIC, SATURN, STARTREK, TOWERMNT, LIGHTHSE, SCATTLE, KINGTUT, ATARIST, and WALL.

Disk 41 contains the color pics ALIENPRK, ASTRONUT, CUBES, UNDERSEA, HORSES, BEATLES, NIMSCOPE and STONEAGE and the high rez pics CHRIST1, JAIL, MODERN4, BROOKE, CHARTP1, CHARTP2, CLIPART1, CLIPART2, CLIPART3, CLIPART4, CLIPART5, CLIPART6.

Needless to say, most of these titles don't convey the picture unless you already have the picture! The solution is to bring your body to the next meeting where all of these pictures will be displayed. A note about picture resolution: For those who lack one monitor or the other, picture resolution is not absolutely critical. There are many graphics conversion utilities available (though the results often leave much to be desired). Two popular conversion utilities are PICSWITCH (disk #38) and TINYSTUFF (disk #9). If you convert TINY pics to DEGAS format the viewer, DEGADISP (disk #38) will display all resolutions on either monitor. While TINYVIEW3 will display all resolutions on color monitors, it will not display color pics on monochrome monitors.



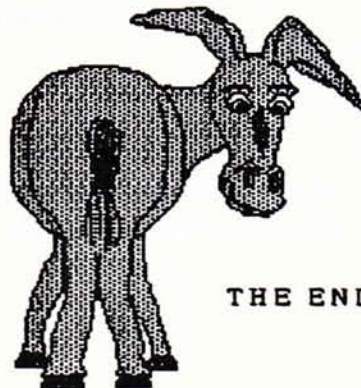
PRESIDENTS REPORT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

I also changed the Column Width call in the CONFIG.TXT file to 8712 to allow the printer to print the full width of the carriage, well all most. It seems that the FX-80 format of the Panasonic will only allow 132 characters in compressed and the carriage movement would allow for 140 but the ROMs in the printer don't know that. Bye for know and hope to see you at the meeting.

EIGHT AND SIXTEEN BIT**News from CES**

There were a number of 3rd party vendors in the Atari booth with some new products. Gordon can tell you about Michtron/Microdeal offerings (Airball looked pretty slick!). EA was showing Music Construction Set for the ST, written by Intersect. Looked pretty nice. Mindscape had some games like Plutos (much... expanded beyond the bootleg version showing up on BBSS) and a 3-D pool game. MidiMaze from Hybrid Arts is finally done... and is being copy protected -- should ship in 2 weeks. They added lots of new features like observer modes, smart and dumb drones, teams, and more -- great game! One small company had a strange package called Easel that let... you put any DEGAS picture in place of the desktop background. Tends to slow down the system overall, though. Timeworks had a collection of utilities in the form of a desk accessories called Partner ST -- a Thesaurus is included. Broderbund announced Printshop, Karateka, and a combined version of Art Director with Film Director (yay!) -- they have committed to attending the Santa Clara Atari show. they're backing us in a big way. Karateka is a Karate game. Like Katate Kid, only better. Microprose is finishing up Gunship and one of their other games (maybe F-15??). Atari has shipped a few of the Arrakis educational programs like Biology, Algebra, and some others, aimed at middle school students. Psygnosis has a hot new game called Barbarian -- a fully graphic fantasy role-playing game -- point at an object and get a window with a list of things to do or describe. Eidersoft had a sound digitizer called Pro Sound Designer. A company called the Robot Factory had a really neat gimmick -- a fuzzy doll robot that was hooked up to the ST through MIDI... and was playing the keyboard in time with a piano roll program from QRS. Its mouth moved in time with the voice of the announcer through a microphone -- this one got filmed by MTV News. There were some other ST things too that were talked about, we'll have to post these to the ST RT as we dig through our notes.

On the game side... We had the new XE Game System on display along with a finished version of Flight Simulator II on a 256K ROM cart (includes the program and the scenery disk). There were 8 or 10 new titles for both the 7800 and the 2600. One-on-One for the 7800 is done and is *great* (I am undefeated in the last year, it must be great!) and Desert Falcon is also done and into production. Even the new 2600 games were pretty impressive. And Activision and Epyx announced that they're doing their own titles for the 2600, and Atari Explorer and ANALOG will begin video game coverage on a limited basis. Atari will have their own booth at NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) late in June, making us the first computer manufacturer to ever exhibit there. We want to OWN the MIDI market. Microdeal showed at CES a 3d game player from sega today... pretty good. They were demoing Airball, a marble madness type game but with rooms nearly 300 rooms and after 4 days of the show we are all still playing, you cannot put this down... shipping June 8th. They also had a replay sound digitiser this, really does digitize great... and has code for GFA as well. They also showed Digi Drum the drum kit sequencer. MichTron was showing a demo version of a new GFA Product called GFA Object. It's similar to Antic's Cad 3D but much easier to use and you can take the pictures and use them in BASIC, Vector and GFA DRAFT PLUS. I will post a demo of Object in the library in a few days.. one other thing is that airball will have a full gem construction kit. They also were showing all of the Make It Move demos.. They attracted lots of attention. The prototype of Cashman also looked good... that games addictive!!!

**THE END**



GRAPEVINE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

THE TRANSLATOR was a project that would allow users to run Atari 8 bit software.

As you may have read in last months' Zmag series, Atari has told the author not to distribute the program. His latest version looks very promising with graphics, sound, etc. If you think that Atari should quit their "greedy" attitude and let this program be completed then write us a letter petitioning Atari to do so. Send all letters to:

ST X-PRESS c/o Translator Petition P.O. Box 2383 La Habra, CA 90632

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MONO MOD

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

Now, unplug the monitor's power cord from the socket in the cabinet, and turn the monitor around, so that the rear of the case is facing you. Place the towel or padding on the desktop in front of the monitor, and tip the entire unit up onto the glass face (carefully!). Now, using the Phillips screwdriver, remove the 5 screws holding the cabinet together. (Two on the bottom, one on each side, about 3/4s of the way up, and one just above the power cable socket.) Once these have been removed, put them somewhere safely out of the way, and don't worry about mixing them up, they're all the same size. Now, gently lift straight upwards on the rear sides of the case, and it should begin to lift away. CAREFUL! You have yet to disconnect the speaker wires, and there's not too much extra wire here. See it? Carefully reach down to the connector where it joins with the mother board, and pull it straight away from the board, disconnecting it. Don't be too concerned about the orientation of the plug, as it will work either direction. Once you've done this, continue to lift the rear section of the cabinet away, feeding the CPU/Monitor cable through the opening as necessary.

Set the cabinet out of the way (And don't STEP ON IT!), and proceed with the REAL modifications! Tip the monitor back down to its bottom, and arrange the mirror so that you can see the screen while working at the rear of the unit. Re-connect the power cord, and turn on the monitor, being careful to NOT stick your fingers inside the wrong areas!

Grab your plastic flat-blade tool, and start looking along the right side of the mother board (remember now, we're looking from the rear of the set!). Near the front of the board, neatly tucked between the picture tube, or CRT, and a vertical metal heatsink/power board, is a row of 3 white adjustable controls, or potentiometers, about 1/2" in diameter, labelled "VLINE", "VSIZE", and "VHOLD". We're interested in "VSIZE", which is the middle control "pot". (NOW you know why I suggested a _long_ tuning tool!) Gently slip the tool in the slotted head of the pot, and while watchi.



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omewhat-fragile core of graphite, which WILL break, if mistreated, so act accordingly! Gently lower your hex-tool into this tube, and you will feel it slide home into the core. (Again, don't press down on the core.) By turning this core in a clockwise direction, and watching the mirror, you will see the screen shrink slightly first, and then grow WIDER!!! (Now we're really starting to cook!) Remember to leave about 1/2" - 3/4" border, to avoid having the edges hidden by the bezel.

What's that you say? Your picture got larger, but it looks off-center? Well, cheer up, bunkie, 'cause we're gonna fix THAT right now!

See that big chunk of glass up front? Well, it has a "neck" on it, and the back end is pointing directly at us, with some strange looking electronic stuff along the way. At the very back of the tube are some electrical connections, but we're not worried about them...what we're after are the two magnets that look sorta like "Q"s around the neck, about 1-2 inches forward of the connections. See 'em?

They're dark grey or black, probably, and have a little "ear" sticking up away from the tube, so that you can -gently- push them around until you get the picture centered on the face of the CRT. Don't worry about touching THEM...just try to keep from resting your hands on any "hot" contacts! This may take a little time to screw up your courage, but once you get the hang of it, you'll find it quite easy! Once you've got the picture fairly well centered, you may need to go back and re-adjust the VSIZE or Horizontal size, as all of these things are interrelated.

Next, we're gonna make the picture sharp again, in case you're worried that you've just lost that beautiful screen that you love so much!

Remember the slotted plastic shaft at the left rear of the mother board? Well, THAT's the "FOCUS" control, and if you'll again resort to the flat-bladed tuning tool, you can use that control to find the best compromise for YOUR taste! Atari chose to go for a tack-sharp center screen, and let the corners be a little softer in focus. You can do the same, or go for sharp corners and let the center go a little soft, or

the screen in the mirror (you DID boot up the system, didn't you?), begin to turn the tool slightly (try not to apply much pressure to the pot, as that CAN effect the setting). The top and bottom of the screen will begin to move, together or apart! Expand the screen to within approximately 1/2" - 3/4" of the top and bottom of the "bezel", or plastic frame on the front of the monitor. (Too close to the bezel, and you'll find that you have to be EXACTLY in front of the screen, or miss some of the information!)

See? Feeling more confident already, aren't we?

Moving right along, we will now swap our tuning tools, opting for the hex-shaped one. Looking near the left rear corner of the mother board, close to the point where the power cord socket is located, you will find a plastic shaft with a slot in it, sticking straight up from the board, and just slightly ahead of that, a strange-looking device, composed of a small-diameter tube, with what appears to be a couple of "bobbins" of wire on it. Inside of a small tube, there is a small, s before!

To reassemble the cabinet, turn off the power, slide the CPU/Monitor cable through the rear cabinet section, and with your third hand...yep, gotta remember to reconnect the speaker leads! There IS a sort of indicator as to which way the plug was originally connected...One side has two slots, and the other side has only one, but the speaker WILL work even if this connector is reversed. Incidentally, if you want to go one step further, Mr. Lew suggests the addition of an Audio-OUT connector from this lead. Your choice.

Finally, having reassembled the cabinet, re-connect the monitor to the CPU, boot the system up, and check out the BIG PICTURE!!! If you have any problems, check first, to see that power is reaching the set, and that the green LED indicator is on. If not, you may not have reconnected the power cord securely, or possibly a fuse has blown or been broken (fuses are located on the vertical power board at the side, near the VSIZE pot, and easily replaced from Radio Shack).

Enjoy your "new" monitor,
Seeya! 'Jack'

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Our next Meeting:
June 10, 1987
(Wed.) 7:00 pm

AT :
Beyer High School
Room 10-C (Lecture Hall)
(1717 Sylvan Avenue, Modesto)
See You There!

TO :

SLCC Newsletter Exchange
P.O. BOX 1506
San Leandro CA 94577

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EXCHANGES WELCOME

